

3/14/07

Hello my name is Bill Berry. I am president of the Guardian Angels group; one of the Middletown chapters of People First CT. Once again I am here today to talk about the R word in D.M.R. I want the word "retarded" removed. I want it changed to the Department of Developmental Services. I don't know anyone who fits that "R" phrase. To me the R word is very offensive-it is the same as swearing. People should have their mouth washed out with soap when they say this word as well. The word isn't used at all in my house. I don't even think it should be printed in the dictionary. When I was in school kids called me retarded at least once every day. I would go home from school and cry. Kids can be real cruel when it comes to the R word. Sometimes even some adults as well. The R word can also hurt a person mentally. It can really scare you. For example for years I wouldn't even go grocery shopping or go in a restaurant.

I was always afraid people were staring at me. Today however, things have changed for me. I try not to let things bother me anymore. I have more friends today than I did growing up. I am even thinking about living independently. People have to understand that anyone who uses the R word is ignorant and don't know better. That is why we are here again today so you will understand and you will know better. I really hope this issue gets resolved soon. I am really getting fed-up with the R word.

Hopefully after all the testimonies given today you will hear us and help us get rid of that nasty R word forever!

Thank you for listening to me today.

Bill Berry
Middletown, CT